

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENOA 0279

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (REFERENCE ADDED)

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, IT  
SUBJECT: LIGURIA'S CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WIN BIG IN LOCAL  
ELECTIONS OF MAY 14/15, 1978  
REFERENCE: GENOA 271

COMPLETE BUT UNOFFICIAL RESULTS FOR THE 5 ELECTORAL TESTS,  
HELD UNDER THE PROPORTIONAL SYSTEM IN 5 LIGURIAN TOWNS WITH  
POPULATION OVER 5,000, INDICATE THAT THE CHRISTIAN  
DEMOCRATS WON BIG AT THE EXPENSE OF ALL OTHER PARTIES,  
EXCEPT THE REPUBLICAN.

1. THE LARGE PARTIES: AS INDICATED IN REFTTEL, THE LARGE  
PARTIES GENERALLY SCORE LESS WELL IN LOCAL THAN THEY DO IN  
NATIONAL ELECTORAL TESTS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY TRUE OF THE  
CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. THE COMMUNISTS, FOR THEIR PART, HAVE  
STEADILY AND ALMOST INVARIABLY IMPROVED THEIR POSITION IN  
TEST AFTER TEST, WHETHER LOCAL OR NATIONAL, THROUGHOUT THE  
POST-WAR PERIOD. THEY TOO, HOWEVER, HAVE IMPROVED MUCH MORE  
DRAMATICALLY IN PAST NATIONAL THAN IN LOCAL TESTS. THUS THE  
MEASURE OF SUCCESS FOR THE TWO PARTIES IS NOT SO MUCH WHETHER  
THEY IMPROVE OVER THE PREVIOUS LOCAL ELECTIONS (THEY SHOULD)  
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BUT WHETHER THEY IMPROVE OVER THE LAST NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

A. THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS GAINED DRAMATICALLY WITH RESPECT  
NOT ONLY TO THE PREVIOUS (1972) MUNICIPAL ELECTION (40.02  
PERCENT AS AGAINST 33.21 PERCENT), BUT ALSO TO THE LAST  
(1976) NATIONAL ELECTION (40.02 PERCENT AS AGAINST 38.21 PERCENT)  
WHICH IS A RARITY FOR THEM. THEY PICKED UP SEATS IN FOUR OF

THE FIVE TOWNS (5 IN TAGGIA, 2 IN LOANO, 2 IN COGOLETO AND 2 IN LERICI) AND HELD ON TO THEIR 9 SEATS IN CAMOGLI.

B. THE COMMUNISTS (PCI) WERE THE BIG LOSERS. ALTHOUGH THEY DID IMPROVE SLIGHTLY, BOTH IN TERMS OF VOTES AND SEATS, OVER THE PREVIOUS MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS (1972) (30.89 PERCENT AND 42 SEATS AS AGAINST 30.38 PERCENT AND 39 SEATS), THEY LOST QUITE DRAMATICALLY WITH RESPECT TO LAST (1976) NATIONAL ELECTIONS (30.89 PERCENT AS AGAINST 36.68 PERCENT IN 1978), WHICH HAS RARELY HAPPENED IN THE PAST, AND NEVER IN SUCH STEEP PROPORTIONS.

2. THE SMALLER PARTIES: AS INDICATED IN REFTTEL, THE POST-WAR ELECTORAL NORM FOR THE SMALLER PARTIES, INCLUDING THE SOCIALISTS HAS BEEN THE REVERSE OF THAT FOR THE TWO MAJOR PARTIES, I.E. TO SCORE LESS WELL IN NATIONAL THAN IN LOCAL ELECTIONS. THUS, THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS FOR THESE PARTIES, IS NOT SO MUCH WHETHER THEY IMPROVE OVER THE PREVIOUS NATIONAL ELECTIONS (FOR THEY SHOULD), BUT WHETHER THEY PICK UP VOTES AND SEATS OVER THE PREVIOUS LOCAL TESTS. OF THE SMALL PARTIES, ONLY THE REPUBLICANS (PRI) CAN TRULY CLAIM TO HAVE WON, FOR THEY IMPROVED BOTH VIS-A-VIS 1976 AND 1972. THE SOCIALISTS (PSI) IMPROVED SLIGHTLY OVER THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1976 (12.27 PERCENT AS AGAINST 10.87 PERCENT) (AS THEY SHOULD) BUT LOST SUBSTANTIALLY, BOTH IN VOTES AND SEATS COMPARED TO 1972 (12.27 PERCENT AND 16 SEATS AS AGAINST 15.06 PERCENT  
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AND 19 SEATS IN 1972). THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS AND THE LIBERALS DID IMPROVE SLIGHTLY OVER THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS OF 1976, BUT LOST COMPARED TO 1972. THE NEO-FASCISTS (MSI) LOST COMPARED TO BOTH PREVIOUS TESTS. THE OTHER SPLINTER PARTIES WON ONLY ON-HALF A PERCENTAGE POINT OF THE VOTE.

COMMENT: THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WON BIG IN SPITE OF THEMSELVES. THEIR NATIONAL LEADERS HAD PRACTICALLY ENJOINED THE ELECTORATE TO VOTE EVEN-HANDEDLY FOR ALL THE PARTIES OF "NATIONAL UNITY" WHICH SUPPORT THE ANDREOTTI CABINET, OUT OF FEAR THAT A BIG DC WIN, ESPECIALLY IF ACCOMPANIED BY AN EQUALLY BIG PCI LOSS COULD UPSET THE APPLE CART IN ROME. UNDOUBTEDLY, THE MAGNITUDE OF THE DC VICTORY IS DISTORTED BY THE LARGE SYMPATHY VOTE WHICH MAY HAVE ACCRUED TO THE PARTY AS A RESULT OF THE MORO TRAGEDY. IT WOULD BE UNWISE, THEREFORE, TO PROJECT THESE RESULTS INTO AN EVENTUAL NATIONAL ELECTION. IT IS CLEAR, NEVERTHELESS, THAT THE PCI IS GOING DOWN AND THE DC IS ON THE UPSWING, AT LEAST HERE IN LIGURIA, WITNESS THE FACT THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS SCORED BETTER IN THE TWO TOWNS THAT ARE PRESENTLY CONTROLLED BY PCI-PSI ADMINISTRATIONS (THE DC GAINED ALMOST 10 PERCENTAGE POINTS IN COGOLETO AND 8 IN LERICI) THAN IN THE THREE WHERE THEY

ARE ON THEIR OWN. THE PCI DROPPED 2 AND 1 PERCENTAGE POINTS  
RESPECTIVELY, IN THE TWO TOWNS. THESE RESULTS WOULD SEEM  
TO BE VALID PROOF OF WHAT WE HAVE BEEN REPORTING  
FREQUENTLY FROM LIGURIA, I.E. THAT VOTERS ARE BEGINNING TO  
DISCOVER THAT THE REPUTATION OF THE COMMUNISTS AS  
EFFICIENT PROBLEM SOLVERS IS NOT, REPEAT NOT, ALL IT IS  
CRACKED UP TO BE.DISCIULLO

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## Message Attributes

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